

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 2078

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, TF, SO, FR
SUBJ: FLCS HOLDS CONGRESS IN HARGEISA

REF: MOGADISCIO 1993

1. SOMALI NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY (SONNA) REPORTED DECEMBER 20 THAT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF THE SOMALI COAST LIBERATION FRONT (FLCS) HAD CONVENED IN HARGEISA, CAPITAL OF SOMALIA'S NORTHWEST REGION. ACCORDING TO SONNA, THE CONGRESS ELECTED A 23-MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE AT ITS FIRST SESSION DECEMBER 19. CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS HEADED BY OMAR ELMI KHAYRE WHOSE TITLE IS SECRETARY GENERAL. NAMES AND AVAILABLE BIOGRAPHIC DATA, IF ANY, OF ALL CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL BE PROVIDED DEPARTMENT (AF/E AND INR/RAF) AND EMBASSIES ADDIS AND PARIS VIA AIRGRAM.

2. SONNA ACCOUNT ALSO NOTES THAT THE CONGRESS LAUDED AGREEMENT REACHED AMONG DJIBOUTI LIBERATION GROUPS TO FORGE A COMMON STRATEGY FOR TFAI INDEPENDENCE. ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL THAT PREVIOUS FLCS LEADERSHIP WAS SACKED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FOR VIOLATING THIS AGREEMENT BY PERPETRATING "UNAUTHORIZED" MURDERS AND KIDNAPPINGS

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(REFTEL).

3. ONE POSSIBLY OMINOUS NOTE IN THE PROCEEDINGS IS THE FORMATION OF "FRONT COMMANDOS" WHICH, ACCORDING TO SONNA, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ARRESTING "COLONIALIST TACTICS IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE INDEPENDENCE-LOVING PEOPLE IN DJIBOUTI". THE COMMANDO FORCE IS "RESOLUTELY BENT ON SECURING THE TRUE

INDEPENDENCE OF DJIBOUTI BY ARMED STRUGGLE IF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT BACKS DOWN ON ITS PROMISE TO GIVE DJIBOUTI FULL INDEPENDENCE". WHILE SONNA DID NOT (AND COULD NOT) SAY SO, COMMANDOS COULD ALSO BE USED AS BLUNT INSTRUMENT TO ENHANCE FLCS AND, BY EXTENSION, GSDR POSITION VIS A VIS OTHER MEMBERS OF UNITED FRONT (I.E. LPAI AND PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY) IN THE PRE- AND IMMEDIATE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIODS. ASSOCIATION OF COMMANDOS WITH TERM "FULL INDEPENDENCE" MAY ALSO BE A WARNING TO FRANCE (AND TO PRO-FRENCH ELEMENTS IN DJIBOUTI) THAT FRONT WOULD ACTIVELY OPPOSE, PRESUMABLY BY FORCE OF ARMS, A PERMANENT OR SUBSTANTIAL FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE AFTER INDEPENDENCE. WHILE WE ARE CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN CERTAIN THAT THIS INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, ISSUE OF FRENCH FORCES IS AN IMPORTANT ONE TO THE SOMALIS. FUTURE FRONT PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE MATTER, THEREFORE, DESERVE THOROUGH SCRUTINY.
LOUGHRAN

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